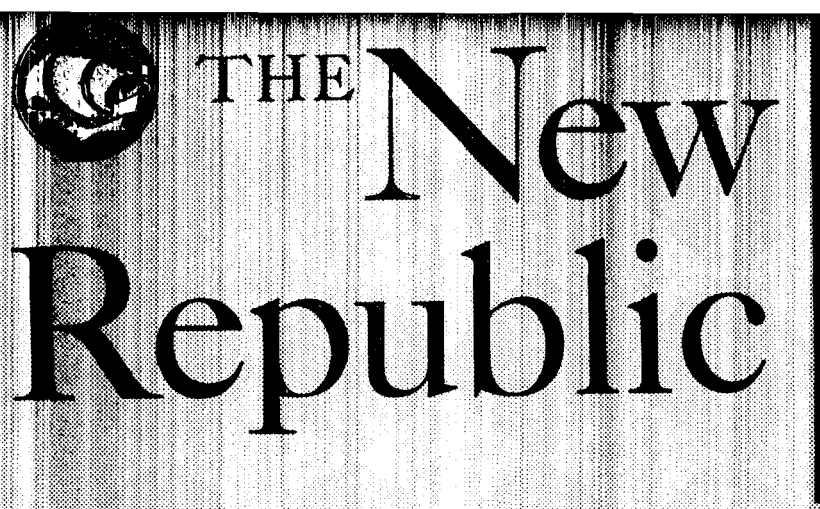




Dear Congress:
Give Us More
Than We Deserve

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The Economy in '58

By LEON KEYSERLING

Who Will Teach the Teachers? *David Stevenson*
Drew Middleton's England *Charles Curran*
Baruch on Baruch *Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.*
The Psychology of Farce—II *Eric Bentley*

Beware the Tender Trap

"Until some unmistakable portent comes along," writes Margaret Halsey, "such as Nixon's resigning his office and going to Africa as a missionary, common sense requires the working hypothesis that he has not changed."

JANUARY 13, 1958

25 cents



Washington Wire

Rockefellers to the Rescue

THE PRESS DISCLOSES that a secret helicopter landing pad has been built near Vice President Nixon's home in the exclusive Wesley Heights suburb to bounce him out fast after a nuclear attack warning. It would be with mixed emotions that this writer (a neighbor of Nixon's) would go down to wave him adieu under such gloomy circumstances. Certainly the Vice President should have priority. Apparently he would need it. The Rockefeller report says the fallout from a single nuclear blast would cover 10,000 square miles with radioactive dust from destroyed structures. As another Wesley Heights resident put it rather sadly, "It would certainly depreciate real estate values."

The spokesmen of the rival "urgency" and "don't-get-hysterical" schools clashed head-on here this week. Their battle will probably dominate the whole session of Congress. We have not seen the President's State of the Union address but assume it will be another "chins-up" message like the two post-Sputnik television addresses in November.

The battle to capture public opinion has been fascinating. It has been a struggle for men's minds. This particular column believed that the United States would rise to greatness in the moment of peril and would react appropriately, even without White House leadership. But as dreary week succeeded week, it really began to look as though Eisenhower would damp down emotion. He unleashed a fog of confusion just as firefighters squirt soapsuds against certain chemical blazes. He was ably assisted by the White House clique that calls Sputnik a silly bauble. It became really terrifying as wavering newspapers (who gave us Eisenhower in 1956) began to parrot the White House warnings against "panic" and equated an aroused feeling of urgency with "hysteria" or "partisan-

ship." The Gaither report seemed satisfactorily suppressed.

Then leadership came from an unexpected quarter. As this column wrote last week the big-money Eastern internationalists are deeply disturbed over their responsibility for Eisenhower and his business administration. After all they picked Ike. Advancing the release time of the Rockefeller report, its sponsors dropped it into the confusion of Washington. For all practical purposes it says the same thing as the Gaither report and can't be suppressed. It is made under impeccably respectable auspices—the Rockefellers, Henry R. Luce, and a group of top-flight GOP corporation executives and independent technicians. It confirms, of course, that we are in a hell of a fix. Further, it assures every editorial writer in the country that he can safely disregard the local chamber of commerce, at least on this issue. The "US is rapidly losing its lead over the USSR in the military race"; we must spend "successive additions on the order of \$3 billion each year for the next several fiscal years." Yes, that just about covers the report.

The State of the Union

IT IS HARD TO SEE how the State of the Union message will be anything but an anticlimax. These annual addresses tell their own dramatic story of the Administration. In 1953 Eisenhower was the victorious crusader shocked at a national debt "now more than \$265 million" and announcing a "new, positive foreign policy." He was applauded 55 times. In 1954 (applauded 50 times) the beaming President announced we had got the "precious intangible, the initiative" in the Cold War and could cut foreign aid. In 1955 (18 times) he rejoiced that the free nations were collectively stronger than ever. In 1956 (not delivered in person)—"Inflation has been halted; the cost of living established."

And last year (only 5 times) the dull address, reduced to 30 minutes, still

brought the happy word that "the long slide in farm income has been halted."

Well, well, we can't wait.

A few small ironies appeal to us. *Education*: If the Communist challenge emphasizes one thing it is the woeful inadequacy of American schools. Yet instead of asking for as much money as in the past two proposed school-construction bills the President now offers a revised program calling for only \$1 billion every four years, or about half that of previous attempts. *Defense*: If the groping public is to know its danger, the facts must be published; instead the Gaither report is suppressed. *Production*: We are engaged in mortal contest with Russia over production yet our economy is so hobbled that steel output averaged only 80 percent of capacity for 1957 and is currently well below 60 percent.

The Dulles Line

THESE curiosities apparently strike only a few, and we must ponder over them in solitude. It is nice to know, however, that we have a Secretary of State who has set his face "sternly and firmly" against negotiations with Moscow on matters of substance. It leads commentator Joseph C. Harsch to observe that Dulles' attitude is "a greater present danger to the security of his country and of the Western world than the slippage in military preparedness."

The old reliable US Chamber of Commerce is already out with a blast against Eisenhower's new education aid program. . . . With George Humphrey gone at least nobody in the *Cabinet* will attack the President's budget this year; that attack led to the unprecedented press-business economy drive that dominated last year's legislative session. . . . Consumers beware: the natural gas lobby has teamed up with the coal lobby to pass the bill freeing it from Federal controls; an amendment would prohibit sale of natural gas at cut rates to industrial coal users in summer months, and should give the margin of votes to put the bill through the house. . . . As a "defense" measure the government asks the 18 oil companies to reduce foreign oil imports into the American far West; besides meaning faster depletion of a US resource, it also angers Canada, one of the countries curbed, who will probably retaliate.

T.R.B.

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GILBERT A. HARRISON, *Editor & Publisher*

MICHAEL STRAIGHT, *Editor-at-Large*

HELEN FULLER, *Managing Editor*

SELIG S. HARRISON, *Associate Editor*

ROBERT EVETT, *Book & Music Editor*

F. R. RUSKIN, *Asst. to the Publisher*

Contributing Editors: Alexander M.

Bickel, Frank Getlein, B. H. Haggin,

Gerald W. Johnson, James E. King, Jr.,

Donald Malcolm, Helen Hill Miller

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Dear Congress

WE HAD PLANNED to greet the Congress with a plea for affirmative action on Reciprocal Trade and foreign aid. Neither is expected to do well, both need all the help their friends can give them. But as we thought over what this Congress is likely to do, our thoughts drifted to gloomier regions.

Not because of Sputnik! And certainly not because of Mr. Eisenhower: he is, as they used to say, merely a symptom; and it has become so commonplace to assume his inadequacy that all the indignation we had left from the '56 campaign has dried up.

No, what has brought us low is The Public—those from whom, in a democracy, all blessings flow, or do not flow.

There is a brand new revelation abroad: Sputnik woke The Public up. If that were only true. Sputnik diverted The Public, temporarily, from the Edsel. Sputnik called attention to the fact that we had become second-best for the moment in rocket techniques. But what of a great nation slipping to second-best in its ambitions? A great nation losing self-respect and thus unable to inspire the respect of others?

We shall hear from the Senators and Representatives that America must re-establish its leadership of the "free world." Free of what? And free to do what? Unless we entirely misunderstood what we see about us, what most of The Public means by "free" is free to pursue unlimited, conspicuous consumption. Admittedly, a very few are pursuing a search for political leadership which, because it is dedicated, calls forth dedication. But a far greater number are pursuing their Congressmen so that there shall be a quota on wool imports, a boost of watch tariffs, a price support, a depletion allowance.

And the many? Indifferent.

There is alarm this week in *Time* at what *Time* and its allies have wrought in Washington. Disillusionment has set in. But for the wrong reasons: because the Russians shot a satellite into space first. A satellite one can see. But do we see the aesthetic squalor of our cities and towns, the cheapening of education by confusing it with entertaining instruction in how to "get along," the tolerance of inanities on the air and on the newsstands?

To what is The Public summoned in '58? To wider TV screens, broader highways, longer cars, glassier buildings, and classier kitchens.

Dear Congress: We have been good. Give us this year our tax cut, and alongside the pie put a moon in the sky.

Correspondence

► Was Mencken Anti-Semitic?

SIRS:

I HAVE just read Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s letter to *The New Republic* (December 16) in defense of the late H. L. Mencken as "the Old Defender of freedom and intelligence." I admire Mr. Schlesinger's loyalty to a fellow liberal, Gerald W. Johnson, who first used the

(Continued on page 23)

Opinion on Television

As purveyors of opinion, we welcome the recent appearance of that commodity on television. The year-end shows featuring the regular news staffs of the three major networks made no pretense of concealing the personal opinions of the reporters. And subsequent "public affairs" telecasts in the first week of the new year were marked by the same kind of editorializing. (A CBS special, "Where We Stand," last Sunday concluded with a summary which began "CBS News believes . . .")

This sharp departure from the unwritten rule against such commentating on the networks is largely circumstantial, we suspect. Most of the current editorializing has been on the perilous weakness of America's military position. And the top brass of CBS and NBC, Dr. Frank Stanton and General David Sarnoff, are members respectively of the two groups which are working hardest to rouse the country to that danger. Dr. Stanton served on the Gaither Committee and General Sarnoff is a member of the panel for the Rockefeller Report, and no doubt they feel that expressions of opinion over the air in support of the findings of these committees is in the public interest at this time.

Still, the lively display of opinion on the air is a departure, and one we hope will lead to some relief from the scarcity of intellectual stimulus on TV. It has long seemed to us that the networks have a responsibility to offer the public the views of its experienced correspondents more often than on annual roundups, or when the personal consciences of network executives are pinched. We should like to know the answers of Dr. Stanton and General Sarnoff to the questions raised by Jack Gould, television critic for the *New York Times*: "Might not the absence of regular commentary on TV, which so preoccupies the American attention, be one factor in the national complacency" against which the Gaither and Rockefeller Committees are fighting?

Merger by Shotgun

TWO YEARS after the AFL and CIO agreed, at the time of their merger, to unite all rival state groups, 14 states are still holding back. Although the state organizations, each representing former AFL and CIO unions, negotiate no contracts and vote no strikes, as the political voices of labor in state affairs they wield great influence. Moreover, the 14 defaulters include important labor states—New York, Illinois, Michigan—comprising two-thirds of the federation's membership. As a consequence, national AFL-CIO leaders have decided to crack down on those states still holding out on merger.

Next week, Michigan will provide the first major test. The AFL camp there blames Walter Reuther's Auto Workers for the impasse, charging that the UAW organ-

izes maintenance and repair workers around the big plants who belong rightfully in craft unions. The UAW replies that the AFL has been to blame, especially the expelled Teamsters' James R. Hoffa. As chairman of the AFL merger negotiations committee, Hoffa until now has been able to insist that all outstanding jurisdictional matters—such as the issue of the maintenance and repair workers—be settled prior to any actual state merger. This, says the CIO, has been nothing but an excuse for preventing any merger at all.

To make matters worse, the Michigan AFL had not expelled its Teamster affiliates when a mission from national headquarters went to force a showdown following the AFL-CIO convention last month. Now a new hearing has been called for January 13, and if voluntary merger cannot be achieved (with the Teamsters left outside), national leaders are prepared to revoke the charters of both old groups and convene a new state constitutional convention.

No Questions Asked

PRESUMABLY the release by the State Department last week of its study on "The Soviet Bloc Economic Offensive in Less Developed Areas" was intended to backstop the Administration's pitch for foreign economic aid. The study does, indeed, supply convincing evidence of the scope of Soviet activity (\$1.5 billion committed in economic aid over the past three years to 10 less-developed countries compared to \$900 million by the US). But the irony is that the Department, in its explanation of why Soviet aid is so effective, inadvertently explains what is deficient in our own approach; or more precisely, what is wrong with the Development Loan Fund, which will be presented in the Congressional debate as our answer to the new international economic offensive of the Soviets.

"In negotiating aid agreements," says the Department study, "the Bloc gives no evidence of requiring economic justification for the projects involved." Instead, Bloc aid betrays,

an obvious effort to select projects which will have an important psychological impact in the recipient country and can hence be exploited by Bloc propaganda organs seeking to make political capital. Since most of the less-developed countries place a high priority on industrialization, the Bloc has concentrated its efforts in the industrial field. The most spectacular example is a steel mill in India.

In other words, the Soviet bloc earns large political dividends at a relatively low cost by channeling its aid to those heavy industries which symbolize the desire of less-developed countries to catch up with the industrialized West. Only last week, on the morning the Department study was released, Czechoslovakia granted India

\$63 million for the construction of a foundry.

Now in the case of India, as in the case of most other under-developed countries, the heavy industries which symbolize progress are frequently marked out for state development and control. And as we have previously noted, this is where the limits of the Loan Fund come in. Fund officials frankly state that they "prefer" to give loans to strengthen private enterprise in recipient countries, with the exception of such areas as transport and power which even in the US have been publicly developed. This policy is defended with the interesting argument that since aid funds are not very great, the amount available should be spent only for those non-controversial public projects (ports, power stations) in which private capital, US or foreign, will *not* invest—thus proscribing from US aid any areas of public enterprise in which private capital *might* venture.

From an economic standpoint, this may be a plausible argument which responsible leaders in the less-developed countries respect. Unfortunately, what the people in these areas—educated and otherwise—*think* about US aid matters as much or more than the economic impact of the aid itself.

"The Soviet Union," as Hans Morgenthau wrote in this journal last year,

doesn't ask what do these countries need in view of their economic and technical developments; rather, it asks what do they want . . . the Russians aid and trade oblivious of the rules of economics but fully aware of the rules of the political game.

The Skilled Worker

IN THE MIDST of the current flap about increasing the number of scientists and engineers, attention might usefully be given to the supply of skilled craftsmen who will be needed to get additional research and development off the drawing board and into three dimensions.

In 1955, 8.2 million skilled craftsmen were at work in this country; projected requirements indicate that by 1965 the economy will need an additional two million. But unless current trends are sharply reversed, the number of such workers is more apt to decrease than to increase over the coming decade.

Why? Because, in the postwar years of full employment, youths coming out of school have been able to find attractive jobs that do not require the years of learning, or of actual apprenticeship, that the skilled crafts require. Between 1951 and 1956, the number of service workers employed went up by a million; the number of professional and technical workers by a million and a third; the number of clerical and sales workers by close to two million. During the same interval, the number of skilled craftsmen registered no change.

Analysis by age groups of the skilled craftsmen now

employed pinpoints the extent to which intake into these occupations has been shut off. In 1951, the group included 784,000 youths in the 14- to 24-year-old age bracket; by 1956, their number had fallen by 222,000 to a total of 562,000. And as the years go by, such a deficiency is of course cumulative.

The Defense Budget

THE WORD from Gettysburg is that a budget of \$73.5-\$74 billion is envisaged, with presumably \$40 billion for defense, as Secretary McElroy has broadly hinted. Comparison of this \$2 billion increase in defense with the supposedly much greater increase recommended by the Gaither Committee (reported by one source as rising year by year to a figure possibly \$10 billion higher than current expenditures in five to ten years), and with the \$3 billion increase suggested by the Rockefeller Brothers Report ("International Security—the Military Aspect") is inevitable. The Gaither figures presumably included Civil Defense, which the Rockefeller figure does not. But the budget proposal must include both Civil Defense and foreign aid, which again the Rockefeller figure does not include, and which the President himself has said must be increased.

The budget, we are also informed, is to be in balance. Thus, the Administration clings to its hope that we may have the best of all worlds. Two questions occur for later answer: Has the balanced budget bugaboo again been allowed to determine how much defense we can "afford"? Has any serious attention been paid to the declining productivity of our economy? We do not recommend increased defense expenditures solely as a means of stimulating the economy—there are plenty of domestic needs for that. We must point out, however, that anti-inflationary budget and fiscal policies that result in inadequate defense expenditures out of a declining national product constitute a spiral certainly no less vicious than the inflationary spiral the Administration so much fears.

Whose Afro-Asia?

THE CONFERENCE of Communist-sponsored Afro-Asian "Solidarity Committees" which concluded in Cairo last week has not been a historic event like the Bandung conference of Afro-Asian governments, and the declarations made by the Soviet spokesman are not diplomatic commitments binding the Soviet Union. But the setting up of a new international organization for the systematic exploitation of anti-imperialist emotions under Soviet leadership, which will rival if not outrank the "World Peace Council" and the "World Federation of Trade Unions" in importance, is nevertheless a step of major significance in the development of Communist strategy.

Three points above all are worth noting. First, Russia

who was not invited to Bandung clearly took precedence over China at Cairo, and the location of the permanent secretariat in that city ensures by itself that Moscow's influence will continue to outrank that of Peking; this shows that Mao's solemn recognition of Soviet leadership at the recent Moscow conference of Communist parties will henceforth apply even to the affairs of those nations who feel a far greater affinity with China than with Russia.

Second, the directives laid down at the Cairo conference for the new movement are deliberately simple and extremist. Demands for immediate "independence," including the ending of United Nations trusteeships, are to be supported all over Africa. Western aid is to be opposed, Western property to be nationalized, and Western investment to be discouraged, while sole reliance on Soviet aid is to be propagated. This clearly is not a program for wooing the responsible neutralist governments or nationalist movements, as the Chinese did at Bandung, but for causing those governments trouble: India and Burma, Ghana and the Sudan will be embarrassed by this "line." On the other hand, it is probably an effective program for recruiting tough Communist cadres in black Africa, where in many cases no organized parties exist as yet. In this context, too, the geographical shift from Delhi and Bandung in Cairo is significant.

Finally, the general secretary of the new body will be Anwar Sadat, member of Nasser's Junta and head of the Egyptian government's propaganda services. He is untainted by Marxism, but militantly anti-Western and chauvinist rather in the Nazi style, and has always supported anti-Western extremists all over Africa whenever Nasser's more cautious diplomacy permitted it. The principal gain for the Soviets is that from now on the Egyptian propaganda machine in Africa and the Middle East will work in harness with their own in the spirit of the new directives—unless Nasser wakes up to the fact that this is hardly compatible with neutrality, however "positive," quite apart from the long-term risks of Communist infiltration and ultimate take-over of such a "united Front."

The new Soviet line should make it easier for an intelligent Western diplomacy to support those Asian and African leaders who wish to be genuinely neutral in order to concentrate on their domestic economic development. In the field of economic aid, this means not only that we should avoid every appearance of imposing political or military conditions, but also every appearance of "competing" with the Soviets in the sense of wishing to exclude them. The Soviets must oppose our aid because they want to reduce these nations to unilateral dependence on the USSR; we can afford to welcome Soviet aid provided it is not given on onerous terms, because the more economic help an independent, under-developed nation receives from *all* sources, the better its chances of solving its economic problems without falling victim to Communist rule.

Belgrade on Khrushchev

DURING a visit to Belgrade these past few weeks, I found Yugoslav Communists of all ranks guardedly but distinctly uncomfortable about Mr. Khrushchev's emerging solar position in the Kremlin. Previously, one heard in Belgrade that Yugoslav leadership must do all it can to strengthen Mr. Khrushchev's hand. It was he who stood for more independence in Eastern Europe and more "democratization" inside the Soviet Union, against the opposition of the remaining Stalinists. It was the rationalization for the steady realignment of Yugoslav foreign policy with Soviet, following one meeting after another between President Tito and First Party Secretary Khrushchev from Belgrade 1955 to Rumania 1957.

Now the Yugoslavs are less sure. One leading Communist remarked with a shrug of the shoulders that there was little political talent left in the Soviet Union after the purges of the 1930's and the stultification of Stalin's latter reign. Khrushchev was only the best of a bad lot, worthy of support because he was less narrow-minded than Stalin's other heirs.

Another high official maintained indignantly that the West has always misconstrued Yugoslavia's attitude toward particular Soviet personalities. "We do not judge events in terms of individuals," he said. "There are positive historical trends toward democratization which cannot be reversed whatever the vested interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy." Then, he added emphatically, "Khrushchev merely represented the most positive trend during the past few years. But there were other representatives." When pressed to enumerate, he lapsed into the usual vague generalities—"Well, a vast majority of the 20th Party Congress in February, 1956, supported the repudiation of Stalinism."

This is not to say that responsible Yugoslav Communists speak openly of their disappointment with present Soviet leadership. Quite the contrary. They are extremely reticent about writing or saying anything—either privately or publicly—which might upset the present delicate balance of Soviet-Yugoslav relations. Yet they are back to stressing more strongly than ever their independent role as "honest broker" between East and West. And one does hear them now admit there may be some truth in the old adage about the wonderful panacea (Khrushchev), which while curing the disease (Stalinism), kills the patient (liberalization of internal and foreign policy).

GEORGE SHERMAN

Vienna

Beware the Tender Trap

by MARGARET HALSEY



PEOPLE WHO have been in concentration camps say that there is almost nothing human beings cannot get used to, after a while. Hence it is quite in the cards that individuals who began in 1952 by admiring Adlai Stevenson may end up in 1960 as, if not admirers, at least resigned to Richard Nixon.

It has been a commonplace for a long time to say that Americans are apathetic about their government. However, a recent interview with the playwright George Axelrod, printed in the *New York Post*, seems to indicate that the electorate is more responsive to what goes on in Washington than might be supposed.

Mr. Axelrod was asked by Mike Wallace why authentic American humor is dying and why the writer of comedy is a disappearing breed.

"Life itself is so satirical," the playwright replied,

it's hard to satirize it. It's all so preposterous and musical comedy, with buffoons running the country and the Russians making us look idiotic. In a grotesque, horrible way, life itself has become pretty much of a joke. And you can't make a joke on a joke.

Some of Mr. Axelrod's words strike a painfully responsive chord in hearts other than those of professional humorists. As the improbable events accumulate—as Little Rock yields pride of headline to Russian moons and American rocket failure—the feeling deepens in many people of being caught up in a sort of gangrenous sunset, brilliant with the streaky pyrotechnics of decay.

In such an atmosphere, it is not too hard to resign one's self to Richard Nixon. We have books like *The Organization Man* to testify that the complexities and contradictions of a business society are markedly erosive in their over-all effect; and so liberal a publication as *The Reporter* has already become sufficiently "adjusted" to the "new" and "mature" Nixon to affirm that, "We don't see any reason why . . . he should be the object of permanent distrust."

This seems reasonable enough at first, but it has a more dubious significance than meets the eye. A flight from moral standards is almost always rationalized as tolerance, flexibility and a sensible, reassuring broadness of viewpoint. Where *The Reporter* leads, perhaps others

will follow—and they will not by any means be uniformly disreputable or a mere lunatic fringe.

As the President's energies decline, the press—with only a few honorable exceptions—will tend increasingly to thrust Excalibur into Mr. Nixon's Arthurian digits, it is going to be more and more difficult to see what a tricky and artful ellipsis the word "mature," in this instance, actually is. Yet only in dealing with a Mongoloid idiot could Mr. Nixon's past history be completely ignored. The money he accepted from California businessmen, the Checkers speech, his campaign tactics against Congressman Voorhis and Helen Gahagan Douglas and his imputations of treason against the Democrats in 1954 are too well known to be dissolved away by the silent treatment. But the word "mature" makes the necessary and unavoidable reference to this passionate pilgrimage without specifically recalling any of its details.

To describe the Vice President as "mature," now that he has arrived, is to convey—by an expert use of suggestion—that he was immature when he was on the way up. Thus his earlier behavior is transmuted. It becomes—not unscrupulous, treacherous and evil—but merely boyish, inexperienced and ill-judged. By a *tromp l'oeil* of vocabulary, what was actually spiritual gangsterism is scaled down to appear as an innocuous over-enthusiasm.

Similarly with the word "new" as applied to Mr. Nixon. It hums with implications. Less flattering than "mature," it concedes tacitly that the Vice President was absent from Sunday School the day they were teaching the Golden Rule and other restraining amenities. But the word "new" also suggests that the subject has reformed, and that where he was formerly bad, he is now good.

The reasoning behind this affirmation is the kind we grew familiar with during Hitler's rise to power. What this reasoning postulates is virtue-through-satiation—being good because there is no longer any need to be bad—because, that is, one has gotten what he wants. Even without the memory of the Rhineland and the Sudetenland, this picture of virtue as arising from ingestion rather than from inner conviction is too absurd to require comment. Mr. Nixon has no more altered in character or personality structure because he is close to the Presidency than Harry Truman has altered in character or personality structure by reason of having left it.

To be sure, Mr. Truman was by his own admission unprepared, in terms of world statesmanship, to enter

MARGARET HALSEY is the author of many books and articles including *With Malice Toward Some*, *Color Blind* and *The Folks at Home*.

upon the Presidency, whereas Mr. Nixon has been conscientiously readying himself for the office. But Mr. Truman was not *morally* unprepared for the White House. Mr. Nixon, on the other hand, suffers from a disability that all the briefing in the world will not mitigate. He cannot go back to Sunday School.

The point is a pivotal one. If the Vice President's energies are truly as monumental as the Luce publications and others in the swelling chorus say they are, then the Presidency in its present form may prove too narrow for them. Mr. Nixon, as President, may wish to extend the powers of his office the way those other dark-jowled fellows—the ones in South America—so often do. The opposition—the people who think that such an Executive should not overbalance the Legislature and the Judiciary—must then expect to get the “old” Nixon treatment. Such people will have to get what comfort they can, as they watch the mud dripping slowly down their reputable names, from reflecting that it was their own too-trustful natures that permitted the Wunderkind to get out of control.

Until some absolutely unmistakable portent comes along—such as Mr. Nixon's resigning his office and going to Africa as a missionary—common sense requires the working hypothesis that he has not changed and is not going to. It may seem easy enough, at this present writing, to make a moral judgment on him and stick to it. With the passage of time, however, sticking to such a judgment is going to grow increasingly difficult. To judge the Vice President leniently—to modulate as *The Reporter* has done into a lower set of standards—may be expected to become more and more of a temptation, both for professional observers of politics and for persons whose interest in the subject is peripheral.

The past five years have demonstrated that in a business administration, the press has a considerable operational resemblance to one of the priesthoods of antiquity. So far from encouraging controversy, discussion and the exploration of ideas, the priests of Ike, like the priests of Isis, concentrate on incantation. They may know—as hierarchs usually do—that there is nothing in the Holy of Holies but a rusty bobby pin and two chipped moth balls, but they do not divulge, or make it easy for anyone else to divulge, this liberating bit of information.

So far as the press and public relations are concerned, the headdress of Tut-ankh-Eisenhower is already nestled on Mr. Nixon's putatively youthful brows, and as the President's arteries close up like morning glories, it is going to take more and more courage to discuss the Vice President in terms of the known realities of his character.

People who live in our society often complain that it is too fluid. What they mean, however, is that automobile styles become obsolete too fast. Emotionally, our society—so far from being fluid—is in some ways extremely rigid. Once the characterization of a public figure is put on the market, so to speak, that characterization freezes

into place and is no longer susceptible to modification.

The ikon of the Great Leader, for instance, has not been extensively altered by the most crashing, smashing evidence of its sentimental inaccuracies. And as Mr. Nixon's stereotype gets the deep freeze treatment—the stereotype of efficiency combined with an agreeably chastened boyishness—more and more respectable and intelligent people will gradually be drawn over to the side of condoning, forgiving and forgetting. It will get lonelier and lonelier to criticize and speak the truth.

AND indeed one can understand why. Should Mr. Nixon succeed to the Presidency, it will be a great temptation to make exonerating noises about him. To live with him as President, in full awareness of what his actions have shown him to be, will require considerable endurance. One's natural instinct will be to set up a sheltering illusion—to warm up the bleak and wintry truth by arguing that he cannot *really* be so bad. There will be a disposition to believe that merely sitting in an office with the American flag and the Great Seal of the United States has an ennobling effect. Or being the father of two. And so they do—but not on confirmed and habitual self-promoters.

Forced to adjust to Mr. Nixon as Chief Executive, many people will automatically develop a sort of selective morality. They will have one set of ethics—the one they were taught as children and have been used to all their lives—for judging themselves and their friends. They will have another, and a much lower one, for the President of the United States.

At first glance, this might seem like a workable compromise; but it is not. Gresham's Law operates just as immutably in ethics as it does in economics, and cheap morals tend to drive good morals out of circulation. To charitable souls, it may seem vindictive to dwell on Mr. Nixon's past, but the issue transcends considerations of charity. To remember the Vice President's record is to keep alive—if only by inversion—that standard of morality which makes life worth living.

Morality is not just a picnic ground for prigs. On the contrary, it provides the hard substratum of seriousness without which, as Mr. Axelrod points out, comedy and authentic humor wither away. (“You can't make a joke on a joke”—and what could be more indecorously comic than pundits and newsmen, themselves unharmed, generously forgiving Mr. Nixon for injuries done to Mrs. Douglas?)

Morality provides the fabric of trust which—to put it on the simplest level—enables the host to go into the kitchen and fix drinks in the certain knowledge that his visitors will not read the letters on the desk. Sententious as it sounds, morality provides a sense of identification with the past. “Thou shalt not bear false witness” is an indispensable part of the cultural heritage. To write it off, merely for the sake of accommodating a brash

arriviste, is to show the idiot good nature of one who commits suicide because a taxi driver says, "Drop dead."

For those who like to talk in what they describe as "practical" terms, morality provides a sort of space platform for judging people and estimating the probabilities of their behavior. Perhaps if we had all been more ethically alert when Mr. Eisenhower obeyed Senator McCarthy's directive *vis-à-vis* General Marshall, we would have been in time to forestall some parts, at least, of the recent infelicities. Basically, America's present unhappy situation with both friend and foe stems from a circumstance that even the best minds did not observe until it was just a little too late—namely, that while Roosevelt made Mr. Eisenhower a general, Nature made him a second lieutenant.

Morality, for the eggheads and liberals, is the clue to conduct. The present situation is outwardly so extravagant as to justify many times over Mr. Axelrod's reference to musical comedy. The highest office in the land wobbles like a spent ping pong ball between a Kansas Hindenburg and a character assassin. The inner situation is more tragic and austere. What is actually involved, in the tender trap about a "new" Nixon, is an attempt to debase the moral currency. This attempt is unconscious, but that does not make it less important to fight off.

Despite their stylistic differences, Mr. Eisenhower and Mr. Nixon—as holders of public office—have one thing in common. Their authenticity is derivative. It comes at second hand from their roles as ball-carriers for business, and not at first hand from deep inner feelings about

representative government. To neither of them is the Presidency an awesome responsibility, held in trust for others. To both it is a mere adjunct—a showy adjunct, but an adjunct nevertheless—to personal life.

In a recent interview, Mr. Richard Maney, dean of theatrical press agents, said that humor today is considered subversive and that no American newspaper would now print Will Rogers. A check on the newspapers of the 1920's bears out the resounding accuracy of Mr. Maney's statement. Will Rogers was acerb and perceptive—and popular—to a degree that we have forgotten. He would certainly have noticed that Mr. Nixon, in his "mature" incarnation, cares more for rectitude and good government than anybody since Juan Peron.

Similarly, a writer like Mark Twain would have had a puncturing thing or two to say about the statement—now on everybody's lips—that Mr. Nixon has done a great deal for race relations. Actually, it is the other way around. Race relations has done a great deal for Mr. Nixon. Race relations, which struggled along without Mr. Nixon in its pioneering days, has ended up in a blaze of glory. It has made even the Vice President an equal.

The mention of the great American humorists suggests that against the ready-mix virtue of the "new" Nixon, we do have weapons. Confronted with a potential President of such a stripe, we can lock up the spoons and the Constitution and treat morality with enough high seriousness to get the humorists out of hock and fetch the writers of comedy back from exile.

Who Will Teach the Teachers?

by DAVID STEVENSON

IF NO classroom in the United States had more than 20 pupils, and if every teacher was paid truck drivers' wages, the schools would still be no good. I know because I have spent four years as a professor in teachers' colleges. That experience tells me, incontrovertibly, that there is no hope for the American school because more than half of the new teachers who enter its doors ought not to have been graduated from high school and, furthermore, learned practically nothing during four years of

college. There is no hope for the American school because the American teachers' college is hopeless.

As evidence, let me cite my own experience as a professor in two of the state colleges (the term *teachers college* has been dropped as over-pejorative). One is Murray State College in Murray, Kentucky—in a state which struggles, not very hard, to be next to last in per capita expenditure for education. The other, Eastern Illinois State University, is in one of the four or five richest states in the union. Let it be said that Eastern Illinois is vastly superior to Murray, but that the North should take little comfort, since two-thirds of Murray's graduates go to the northern midwest to teach where the high salaries are paid.

When I accepted the position of assistant professor at Murray State College at \$4,200 a year, I was glad to get

DAVID STEVENSON, *associate professor of English at Washington College (Md.), has taught at Lincoln College and the University of Michigan (where he received his Ph.D.) as well as at the two colleges he describes in this article. "Please note," he says, "I have never been fired."*

it. A year previous, after teaching in college for eight years and inching toward my doctorate, I had moved my family back to the university campus in order to write my dissertation and had taken a job in the library at \$3,000 in order to eat. By the time I got the job at MSC I was physically, mentally and financially drained. From an employer's point of view, although writing my dissertation, I was sans-doctorate, and the eight-year lapse since my Master's had been granted was not a promise of brisk scholarly output. From my point of view, \$4,200 was not bad, considering my unfinished status. When it dawned on me that this salary was for 11 months' work rather than the usual nine (from my point of view, a reduction of \$700 a year) I was not quite so jubilant. At any rate, we were so broke that when we got to Kentucky I had to locate a grocer who could carry me until the first paycheck, so I was in no condition to quibble about two months' extra work.

In this respect I was typical of most of that segment of the faculty who had immigrated from the great outside and who provided the minimum of Ph.D.'s demanded for accreditation. Most of these poor devils had arrived destitute, with unfinished dissertations and, with their meager salaries and growing families, had failed to gather the necessary cash reserve over the years to escape. Too, a few years at MSC damns a man and he abandons all hope.

To help knot the ties that bind, the college year ran from June to June. If one resigned after signing a contract in late April, he was guilty of breach of contract. If he said he was leaving and did not sign, he ran the risk of being turned loose without summer employment and of losing two months' pay. No matter when he resigned, he lost his August salary, since August was regarded as a paid vacation which the college was not obliged to grant someone for the benefit of some other institution. Furthermore, most colleges issue their first paychecks at the end of September, after the first month of employment. Added to these hazards was the fee paid to an agency—five percent of the first year's salary—which was due when one signed an initial contract, or six months later (about October 1) if one paid interest on a note. To escape from MSC in the 1940's was like getting out of Alcatraz, and it was still no mean feat in 1955 when I accomplished it. This sense of being trapped was especially strong among teachers of the humanities who are still a drug on the teachers' college market.

As might be expected, the dignity of the faculty was insulted almost daily by the administration of the school, a strange group of career politicians with academic degrees in off-breeds of education such as industrial arts and agriculture. Faculty committees existed only when an accreditation inspection was imminent. The registrar took roll in faculty meetings with a contemptuous pre-

tense of secrecy. The only time during my stay when a vote was taken during a faculty meeting, it was by "standing up and being counted," and we were told before the great event that anyone who voted against the measure was not the kind of person who deserved to teach at ol' Murray State. If a member of faculty was recalcitrant in any respect, his contract was withheld until he went to the president and begged for it, or, if his offenses during the past year were minor, he was simply docked a portion of the small "across the board" increment. The retirement plan was inadequate and there was no such thing as tenure.

While conditions varied from department to department, everyone could rightfully say that he was overworked. One semester I had 180 students in five classes, including 90-some composition students. This was nothing when compared to the load of the woman who taught five sections of freshman composition each semester, year in and year out, and of one teacher of educational psychology who had several sections of more than 70 students in a classroom which would have been crowded with 50.

Overcrowded classrooms and overworked faculty made MSC a paradise of plagiarism. A coach told me that he knew a boy had written a term paper himself because he had personally assigned another student to help. It was common knowledge that one of the older professors always gave the same tests and that he knew they had long since become the property of every fraternity, sorority, dormitory and organized clique on the campus. One professor unwisely left an examination in his typewriter, locked his office and went home for dinner. When he returned a student was at his desk, copying the questions. (Students had keys to all offices, which were handed down from generation to generation.) The student, when brought before the authorities, was punished by being forbidden to take the course again for six months.

The students were not all dishonest, of course, but it was mighty hard to be one of the gang if you were not. Many were of such low ability in reading and writing that they were forced to cheat in order to pass. They had learned this simple dictum in high school, and it had earned them the diploma which allowed them to enter any tax-supported college or university in the state; it was their natural expectation that college was a similar game, played by similar rules.

Since the college's bread and butter depended almost entirely upon the enrollment figure it presented to the legislature, the proportion of failures did not and could not reflect the degree of failing work in our courses. He who failed more than a modest proportion, say 10 percent, was in danger of a verbal whipping from the president, the loss of a raise or promotion or outright dismissal. As it was repeatedly stated, we must remember always that we were teaching the child, not the subject.

Any student who had intellectual pretensions was a

lost sheep at MSC and stayed only because of the pinch of poverty. Most of the school's crudities can be laid at the door of its dingy determination to compete with other schools by being the cheapest college in a 100-mile radius: its graduates could scarcely pass as educated people, even by teachers' college standards, if it were not for the American superintendent's tradition of regarding a degree as a degree, no matter where earned. Last year Murray State graduated about 700 teachers who are entering school systems in all of the more prosperous states.

MY experiences and observations at Eastern Illinois will demonstrate why I believe the case is hopeless, even if more money is spent on buildings and salaries. For, while education at MSC was an economic impossibility, Eastern Illinois has no such financial excuse. In fact, my salary as an assistant professor was \$5,200 for nine months, \$1,000 more than I had received two years before for 11 months in the classroom. In addition, there were other financial wonders: I would teach every other summer, for one-sixth of my yearly salary; an annual increment of nearly \$200 was guaranteed; the retirement plan was lush, including such benefits as life insurance and disability pay; there was a published salary scale and one could chart one's course up the golden stair to a top of \$8,000—which would undoubtedly be raised as the years went by. Tenure was granted after three years of probation. Teaching loads were moderate. Travel allotments for professional conferences within the state were generous. The school was jammed with doctorates. New buildings were sprouting everywhere. Where could the minds of the young, under the wise and undisturbed guidance of an enlightened faculty, develop more favorably? What more could one ask of a college?

One must, I found, ask much more of a college than that it put something in the pocket. I learned that the predominant majority of the faculty cared for nothing but waiting, with varying degrees of patience, while its pocket was filled. Intellectually the school is as barren as the face of the moon. In its determination to suppress egg-headism, Eastern Illinois has become a fortress of flatheadery.

The college is all on paper. It teems with committees which meet, deliberate and go home. The faculty senate, which includes many administrators who teach one class occasionally, turns out reams of mimeographed minutes but can communicate with the governing board only through the president of the college. The large and inert AAUP chapter met only twice last year because it appeared that raises would be granted and there seemed no other valid reason for going to all the trouble of meeting.

A gentle hypocrisy hangs like mist over the college atmosphere. The annual states that two hours of preparation precede each hour of recitation. Faculty written reviews of plays, concerts and publications are fulsome: a group of touring players is rated as equal to the Old Vic;

a symphony orchestra composed of local talent is said to be masterful and to have perfect balance; a group of historical skits using songs, poems and narration is called the perfect marriage of literature and history.

Tenure, next to pay, is the cement which holds the institution together, and keeps it backward. One has nothing to say about the policies of the school until the hand of tenure has been laid upon him. And it is sometimes withheld if a candidate voices original ideas before his three years of probation are over. It is then said that he is not happy here and that it is for his own good and with deep regret that one cannot recommend that he be kept. Next to voicing opinions, doing research or holding students to a strict intellectual accounting is cause for regretful dismissal. (I might add that I left voluntarily and before the tenure question arose.)

There is such a turnover—approximately one-fifth in the summer of 1956—that new people, no matter how respectable their collegiate antecedents nor how extensive their experience, are regarded with annoyance if they attempt to change the age-old procedures which worked when the school was one-third its present size.

These measures do not make young men and women seek tenure unless they are misfits who cannot get out, are so security-hungry that they will put up with a system they hate and scorn for the sake of salary, or are so dull that they do not recognize the pattern for what it is.

This waste of talent is especially true in the humanities, which are a kind of fifth-wheel adjunct to the educationists, anyway. The education department, composed of 12 members of the administration who teach a course now and then and seven actual teachers, is the largest and most influential unit in the college. All of the major administrative posts, except that of president and dean, are held by *quasi* members of this department. These people have little understanding of the need for literature or history or mathematics or foreign language in a student's curriculum. Under them, Eastern Illinois is and will remain a normal school, no matter what its name and no matter what degrees it lists in its catalog; and its students will always receive a second-rate education.

Let me illustrate further by a few facts about the education curriculum. About one-third of the total credit hours of the elementary major are earned (if one wishes to call it that) in how-to-do-it courses, whether under the education department or the music, art, English or what-have-you department. The prospective grade-teacher takes one-third less rhetoric than a student who needs it less, and is not required to take any courses beyond the junior level except in education. It goes without saying that she takes no foreign language, which would be much too difficult.

There is a feeling among prospective teachers that if you are not very bright you go for an elementary certificate, and if you are a little bright you go for a secondary certificate; one need not know very much if he is to teach

in the lower grades, so long as one is able to get along with children. Courses in science are very hard and, besides, what good will they do you in the second grade? Practice teachers who stand before a class and say "he don't" and "they was" are not rare.

The winsome attitude toward "impractical" subjects is evidently shared by some of the education professors who do not want to hurt a student's feelings by giving him a low grade. In other words, since the theory that Johnny should not be induced to read unless Johnny wants to be induced to read is dispensed by the educators, it is only logical their professors reward their own students accordingly. As a case in point, a woman in one of my classes, when she could not write a passing composition, turned in one she had copied from a magazine; and when I refused to pass it, correct spelling or no correct spelling, she was sure I had a personal grudge against her. When last I heard, she was making her third try at passing the first English course, but had received one D and two C's in education courses.

SUCH lack of grading conscience is common throughout the college, so that the grade point averages of graduates are respectably high, even though a representative sampling of last year's freshman class showed it ranked at only the twenty-seventh percentile in language skills on a nation-wide entrance examination. This figure, by the way, is against other teachers' colleges, a considerably higher average score being earned by university and private college entrants. (Eastern Illinois students do better in mathematical skills than in language, it should be added.) My own survey of the freshman class is much more random than the one I have referred to; while freshmen I have known in class for 12 weeks are taking their final examination, I divide them into three categories: acceptable, doubtful, unacceptable as college material. My results were 54 percent, 13 percent, and 33 percent, respectively. Of course, as many as half of the 33 percent will not graduate, but the fact that one cannot communicate with a third of one's students is bound to water down a course. And it is not necessarily the inadequate who drop out; lack of money, marriage and family complications may be responsible. I would judge that one-sixth of the teachers graduated are incapable of reading and writing at an eighth-grade level.

The state university contributes heavily to Eastern Illinois' enrollment by failing out a considerable proportion of would-be engineers and doctors who trip it lightly over to EIS to compromise on careers as teachers—or school superintendents. These retreads infect the student body with a contempt for the school, and student morale is low and traditional activities perfunctory. Also, more than half of the students work outside, some in order to support themselves, some in order to support their wives and children, some in order to support their automobiles.

EIS does no better in the moral training of teachers

than in their academic training. Cheating on examinations and the plagiarizing of papers is as rife as at Murray State College. One of my better students said in a theme on whether or not integrity was a luxury for a student:

... In my first quarter of studying I found I could not come up to the standard of the majority of students in some of my classes. I did not cut many classes and I knew I had taken as many notes as most of the students. However, when test time came around I could not answer some of the questions with as many of the details as some students. Most of my answers were almost completely correct but in comparison with the other papers mine did not look so good. . . .

When second quarter rolled around I knew more people. One day I walked into class the day a test was scheduled. One of my friends called me back and told me the test was out. I was to study this paper for a few minutes and act as if I was just talking to him. I did not know if I should do it but I went along. I then returned to my seat and I heard this same boy call back several other people. We took the test and I passed with a perfect paper.

Since this time I have been given added help. People tell you not to feel guilty because everybody does it. . . .

In pursuing the happy wisdom acquired through similar experiences, future teachers of America committed these acts, to my knowledge, at Eastern Illinois during the past year: copied verbatim (and usually incorrectly) answers on tests; sent proxies to write qualifying English papers (under supervision of instructors who did not know their identity); stole the stencil used in the IBM machine for mass correction; bought (and sold) papers based on topics listed on test sheets stolen from the mimeograph room; bought (and sold) book reviews; used textbooks and all types of crib notes during examinations; finished examinations rapidly and loaned answers to dullard friends for the remainder of the examination period; submitted term papers originally submitted in another college; copied term papers directly from printed sources. In spite of this compilation, I am not aware that any student was punished by school authorities, although some were penalized by individual teachers. One associate professor wrote the following on a term paper before returning it with a grade of C minus: "This paper was not bad the first time I read it, but I am getting tired of having it turned in as original work."

Taught by the demoralized and the incompetent of the academic world, prepared for teaching by a curriculum which shuns knowledge, selected from those who would fail in other professions, the young teacher enters the school systems of the country convinced that he is underpaid and overworked. And since I have no doubt that the Murray State Colleges and the Eastern Illinois State Universities of the nation will continue along their present paths forever, I do not believe a word of it when I hear that what this country needs most is bigger schools and higher paid teachers. We need teachers.

The Economy in '58

by LEON H. KEYSERLING

AS WE enter this new year, we must first of all make up our minds whether to be satisfied with mechanical "forecasts" of the economic weather ahead. Pure economic "forecasting," or guessing what past and current experience may project automatically into the future, is the main concern of a pushcart peddler, trying to decide where he should stand and what he should offer for sale. But such "forecasting," as distinguished from deciding what we need and can have, is accorded relatively less weight by business units as they grow larger and more powerful. And a great nation, preoccupied with "forecasting" what might happen while doing little or not enough to shape the course of events, would be doomed to suffer disaster in our time.

This applies to international affairs, where we in the United States have tried to react to "forecasts" of what our opponents might do, instead of maintaining the initiative for ourselves. But it applies even more to our domestic economic policies, because in this area we have more potential control over the situation. Moreover, it is becoming painfully clear that the course of our domestic economy is running contrary to our most profound international interests, both in its impact upon our own capabilities, and in its impact upon the attitudes toward us of both our friends and opponents.

The importance of this was brought home to me sharply during the more than two months that I spent this past fall in India. The leaders of the largest national aggregate of people in the free world were, of course, impressed by the Russian space machines and their bearing upon the relative progress of science in the United States and elsewhere. But these Indians were even more affected by the glaring headlines in the American press, to the effect that an awesome gathering of our top business pacemakers at a luxury resort, and a significant number of our government economists and policymakers, were "forecasting" further recessionary trends in 1958. The major Indian concern was not only with respect to the harm that the verification of such "forecasts" would do to other free world economies. Far more poignant was the Asian reaction to a demonstration that American

business and government were becoming slaves to their "forecasts," instead of exhibiting any sense of mastery over domestic events. In Western Europe this past summer I heard similar sentiments from alert representatives of Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the Low Countries, Scandinavia and Switzerland.

It is no answer to say that we are a free country with free enterprise, and that therefore we can "forecast" but not be highly purposeful. Some of the free countries of Western Europe, all struggling with intrinsic economic problems far more difficult than ours, and none of them blessed with our productive resources, have with the aid of conscious policies been registering rates of real economic growth several times greater than our own during the past few years. And the Russians have recently announced an economic expansion of about 10 percent during the past year, measured against a goal of about 7 percent. Are we, within a decade from now, to face a condition where it might take us several years to "catch up" with the Soviets on the whole economic front, just as we are now told that it may take us 10 years to catch up on some other vital fronts?

The recessionary movement by now is indeed serious. Unemployment has risen 21 percent compared with a year ago. Industrial production, private business investment and corporate profits are all down 5 percent or more. Some key industries are operating as low as 70 percent of capacity. Despite recurrent official propaganda to the contrary throughout 1957, depressed net farm operators' income in real terms is now about 5 percent below a year ago. Average real weekly earnings in manufacturing have fallen by \$2.35, and real per capita income after taxes—the consumption underpinning of the whole economy—has dropped about \$29. Inventories have risen and consumer credit has expanded dangerously.

Yet we still hear talk in high places about "healthy readjustments," and in fact national economic policies are applied to "encouraging" these "adjustments" instead of attempting vigorously to reverse the recessionary trend in time. As our economy continues its now accelerating descent, the hour has come for the citizen to ask his government: how low is too low?

But this recession of today, against which almost no counter-action has yet emerged except a puny change in Federal Reserve Board policy and some slight juggling of federal housing policy, is only the inevitable outcome

LEON H. KEYSERLING, *consulting economist and attorney, and President of the Conference on Economic Progress, is former chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisors.*

of a much longer and equally neglected adverse trend. An over-all economic expansion of about 4.5 percent a year is essential in the American economy, to make new jobs for the growing labor force plus those displaced by technological progress. On the average during the period 1947-1953, we exceeded this annual growth rate. But the average annual growth rate in real terms slowed down to little better than 2.5 percent in 1953-1957, to only about 2 percent in 1957, and to less than one percent at an annual rate by the fourth quarter of 1957. The result is that the annual rate of our total production is now more than \$32 billion below full production. The true level of unemployment is now above 4 million*, or more than 1.5 million in excess of a level consistent with full employment. During the past five years as a whole, we have lost more than \$78 billion worth of potential production through departures from full production, and lost about 8.5 million man-years of potential job opportunity through departures from full employment.

IF we had not suffered these gigantic shortfalls during the past 5 years, we would have had more than enough economic growth to support generously rising living standards, soundly expanding business investment in plants and tools, and a very much higher level of national security outlays and international economic cooperation. In addition, we would have had enough to bring our basic domestic public programs into line with the growing needs of the people—education and health, social security and housing, and resource development. We would even have been able, with a \$78 billion larger total national product, to have balanced the federal budget with much higher outlays and lower tax rates.

Although our economic growth in each year during the past four or five has been only a fraction of what it needed to be and should have been, public officials have led us in exultation because we "broke all records" by being "higher than the year before." Instead of lifting production and employment to the full attainable levels required to meet our international and domestic responsibilities, we have tailored these responsibilities to what a retarded economy "could afford."

The cumulative and rapidly intensifying lag in our total economic performance has resulted essentially from the failure of consumption to expand enough to keep up with our rapidly expanding productive powers. During the past 2 years (until the most recent months, when the recession has deepened), plant and equipment investment in the means of production expanded several times as fast as consumption. During 1957 as a whole, the actual expansion of consumption sank to a rate only about two-fifths of the rate needed for full prosperity. By fourth quarter 1957, the annual rate of this consump-

tion lag accounted for about three-fourths of the lag in total economic activity. Even this deficient consumption growth has been supported by excessive credit, while the incomes of consumers have lagged even more. In 1957, total real consumer income after taxes grew only one half as fast as actual consumption, and by fourth quarter 1957 total real consumer income was actually declining.

Under these circumstances, the very sharp price inflation, from the beginning of 1956 until the very most recent months, has not been due to excessive wages or other consumer incomes pressing against our productive facilities. Instead, we have witnessed the almost unique phenomenon of vast price increases in a very slack economy, made possible by the power to "administer prices" with relative disregard for the "laws of supply and demand." From January, 1956, to November, 1957, industrial production declined 2.8 percent, but industrial prices rose almost 4.5 percent. In some key industries, prices rose several times as fast as production declined. Nor has the inflation been due to wage costs forcing employers to lift their prices. The higher prices yielded excessive profits, which were ploughed into investment and production too high relative to consumption.

National economic policies have not only failed to modify these trends; actually, they have augmented them. A few months ago, with idle plants and manpower almost everywhere, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board were manfully defending the tight money policy on the ground that it would properly encourage more savings and more investment in the means of production, and would properly discourage consumption. Even the President was induced to urge consumers to "buy less." Amortization and depreciation programs for industry have fed the investment boom, and so has an insufficiently progressive tax policy. The Secretary of Labor, even more recently, has said that the proposal for a wage freeze should be given serious consideration; and the Secretary of Agriculture, who has shown such perspicacity in "solving" the farm problem through the cruel deflation of farm income, has lent his moral weight to the wage freeze idea. In the over-all, the federal budget on the spending side has bought far less national security and domestic programs than we needed and could afford; and from the viewpoint of the whole economy, the federal budget has pulled us downward instead of giving us a lift.

With the Administration still clinging obdurately to these kinds of policies, is it not time for the citizen to ask his government: how wrong is too long?

Between now and 1960, we have the capability, and therefore the need, to increase employment by 3.8 million, to increase productivity or output per man-hour by more than 16 percent, and to lift the annual rate of our total national production by about \$81 billion in real terms. Gradually but steadily, total wages and salaries in real terms need to rise by 1960 to about \$41 billion

* The official count is now somewhat above 3 million, but this does not include "temporary" layoffs, which should be included to show the true level of unemployment.

above the 1957 level, and net farm operators' income needs to rise about \$8.5 billion. Under the impetus of this expansion, domestic business investment in 1960 should be about \$16 billion above the 1957 level, while professional income and the incomes of corporate business should be almost \$15 billion higher.

AN important part of this task resides with private industry. The leadership groups still enjoy sufficient profits and other assets to expand consumer purchasing power, through an admixture of wage increases and price reductions. This expanded purchasing power would also add to employment. These business leadership groups would be wise, now that they are abating their investment in plant and equipment, to invest more in the expansion of markets for their products. Such investment would come home to them; by reactivating the whole economy, it would open renewed opportunities for business investment proper—and for profits, too.

The federal government also has a big job to do. About a third of the lag in our total economic activity today is due to a federal budget which has declined sharply, relative to the population and to the size of the economy. An expanding federal budget would expand jobs, consumption, and production. Declarations to the contrary notwithstanding, it would also stimulate business investment and strengthen business confidence.

A drastic reconstruction of the federal budget is even more needed, from the viewpoint of the great priorities of our national and international interests. Despite the rising international threat, federal outlays for major national security purposes declined from 10.75 percent of our total national economic activity during the fiscal years 1954-1958 as a whole to 9.69 percent in the 1958 budget. Federal outlays for all domestic programs—including natural resources, education, health and housing, labor and agriculture, social security and welfare, and general government—while rising very slightly in the most recent year, have declined from 7.86 percent of our total national economic activity in the peacetime years 1947-1950 to 7.02 percent in the peace and war period 1947-1953, and to only 6 percent in the 1958 budget. On a per capita basis in uniform 1956 dollars, a comparison of the same periods reveals a decline from \$167.33 to \$154.62 to \$149.89.

For all of the essential domestic programs just mentioned, per capita federal outlays need to be raised gradually from less than \$150 in the 1958 budget to more than \$182 in calendar 1960, measured in 1956 dollars. This would enable us by that year approximately to double the annual rate of total educational outlays from all sources and social security and welfare protection in all its forms, and to expand health facilities greatly. Proper stimulation of housing, both private and publicly-assisted, would enable us between now and 1960 to build an average of more than 2 million new homes a year. An

adequate budget would enable us to lift national resource programs to about 50 percent above recent levels, and to create a fully prosperous agriculture. On fronts related to international security and world peace, we need to expand per capita federal outlays for economic and technical development overseas from \$12.51 in the 1958 budget to almost \$19 in 1960, measured in 1956 dollars. With all of these programs, there would still be room to lift the annual rate of national security outlays immediately by about \$2.5 to \$3 billion above the recent level, measured in current dollars. If need be, we could do much more. We do not now confront a situation where tardiness and neglect on vital domestic fronts would produce speed and success on the national security front. We do now confront a situation where weakness on each front breeds weakness on many others, and where strength on every front is essential to strength on any.

This is because the total of what we are now doing is so far short of our total productive capabilities. In a fully expanding economy, the above-proposed increases in federal outlays would come to about 16 percent of our total national economic activity in 1960, compared with an estimated 16.4 percent in calendar 1957, and 17.4 percent in 1953-1957. The national debt would drop from almost 63 percent of our total national production in 1957 to about 54.5 percent in 1960. These goals, in a sufficiently expanding economy, can be achieved with a slight surplus in the conventional budget, and a substantial surplus in the cash budget, even with lifting of the individual income tax exemption by \$100, or some other equivalent action, to stimulate the consuming power of low income groups.

Because we are now so far short of full employment and full production, and even further short of meeting the imperatives of our domestic and international needs, the year 1958 calls for a relatively more rapid rate of progress toward these 1960 goals than the average rate called for in the whole period between now and 1960. And only thus can we safely check the current decline before the eleventh hour.

If the Administration assumes leadership in these directions and if the Congress responds; if the tight money policy is genuinely abandoned; if we stimulate a vast housing program instead of fiddling with insubstantial details; if we bring the power of government and of public opinion to bear upon administered price inflation; if the government helps to restore business confidence by "budgeting" a full economy in accord with the Employment Act of 1946; if we develop a constructive farm policy worthy of the name; if we build and educate the human resources, and develop the natural resources, which are the source of all our strength; if we lift our national security and other international efforts in accord with the urging of the best qualified experts; and if we make the whole federal budget an integral part of an expansionary program in accord with our capabilities—

then we shall do well indeed in 1958 and thereafter.

But if instead we continue along the paths that we have thus far been following, with only a few minor embellishments, accompanied by vague exhortations about "danger and sacrifice," then 1958 will bring some deepening of the current recession. This is likely to lead to a true level of more than 6 million unemployed, and to a lag in total economic activity of more than \$50 billion at an annual rate. I still believe that there are already enough safeguards in our economy to prevent even such events from carrying us downward into a classic depressionary spiral. I think that, even with mild policy adjustments, we would come out of the 1957-58 recession as we came out of the 1954-55 more moderate downturn. But rising unemployment *could* further dampen business investment intentions. It *could* also cause even the employed to postpone expenditures in huge volumes. This *could* start a veritable downward spiral. Sensible leadership should not take this risk. In any event, the supreme problem is not merely to avoid a depression, but rather to release our full energies so that we shall be able to do both at home and overseas what we most assuredly cannot afford to do without.

More evidence as to which of these alternative courses

we shall follow in 1958 and thereafter will come very shortly, in the form of the President's State of the Union Message, Budget Message, and Economic Report. The shaft for these messages is already in the stone. And although we should not judge prematurely, the advance descriptions in the press are not too encouraging. These descriptions indicate some but perhaps not enough expansion of the missile program and of research related to that program; but they indicate this only at the expense of other programs which are equally essential to the strength and security of the Nation as a whole. With the true level of unemployment already above 4 million, and with unused plant capacity as high as 30 percent of full capacity in some basic industries, the featured government "forecasters" still tell us to "expect" a substantial further deterioration for at least the first half of 1958. The Secretary of Labor tells us that unemployment would not become "serious" enough to evoke strong counter measures unless it rises to 6 million by the official count, which would be a true level of perhaps 7 million. And the President's Council of Economic Advisers, which is mandated to substitute positive economic policy for "forecasting," has fallen into a state of innocuous desuetude, with a posture of "serene I fold my hands and wait."

THE FOURTH R

Delegates on the UNESCO Executive Board have objected to Director Luther Evans' gift of radar equipment to Egyptian schools.—*News item, January 1.*

WHAT says UNESCO's Board,
Dr. Evans?
"Your grant must be deplored,
Dr. Evans.
Though cultural subscriptions
UNESCO allocated,
Radar for the Egyptians
Was never contemplated.
Our program is progressive,
But Radar is excessive;
We censure this award,
Dr. Evans!

"Three Rs they need; no more,
Good heavens!
Why have you made it four,
Good heavens?
UNESCO is proceeding
With basic education—
'Rithmetic, writing, reading,
These make a firm foundation.
We sanctioned no addition
For technical tuition,
Of use in time of war,
Good heavens!

"Must infant fellaheen,
(Good heavens!)
Trace blips upon the screen?
(Good heavens!)
We passed no resolution
When Radar was requested;
Against this contribution
We strenuously protested.
The cultural grants we made, are
Not meant to give them Radar,
A military machine,
Good heavens!

"WE ON three Rs agree,
Dr. Evans.
A fourth there should not be,
Dr. Evans.
While bent upon improving
Egyptian minds and manners,
We are strongly disapproving
Of electronic scanners.
Can Radar's installation
Help cultural education?
How cultural can you be?
Good heavens,
Dr. Evans!"

SAGITTARIUS

BOOKS & COMMENT

The Psychology of Farce—II

by Eric Bentley

THE FUNCTION of "farcical" fantasies, in dreams or in plays, is not as provocation but as compensation. The violent release is comparable to the sudden relieving hiss of steam through a safety valve. Certainly, the mental energies involved are destructive, and in all comedy there remains something of destructive orgy, farce being the kind of comedy which disguises that fact least thoroughly. But the function of orgies is also that of a safety valve. An orgy—as still practiced in the Munich Carnival, for example—is an essentially temporary truancy from the family pieties and, like farces, if it has any appreciable effect at all, it helps those pieties to go on existing. The main point of Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents* is pertinent here: when we buy civilization, as we do, at the price of frustration, the frustrated impulses become a potential source of trouble. The pressures are enormous and perpetual. We ought to welcome any relief from them, however slight or trivial, provided it is harmless. Dreams are the commonest relief but are usually unpleasant. The most pleasurable relief is to be found in the arts, for one of which I am staking out a claim in this essay.

In his book on jokes, Freud explains in effect that he would "let them scoff at marriage" not only because he would never be able to prevent them but also because a safety valve is a good thing. It is a sort of open secret, he says on one page, that marriage does not satisfy the sexual demands of men and that this secret is half-kept, half-told in marriage jokes. I would add that the classic form of the marriage joke takes a couple of hours to tell and has a cast of three characters known as *le mari, la femme, et l'amant*,—"hence," again, "the term bedroom farce." Just as Restoration Comedy was provoked by the Puritans and is, so to speak, forever dedicated to them, the farce of adultery has been provoked by married men and is dedicated to

them. Farce in general enables us, seated in dark security, to enjoy the delights of complete passivity while watching on stage the most violently active creatures ever imagined by man. In that particular application of the general formula which is bedroom farce, we enjoy the adventure of adultery, ingeniously exaggerated to the *n*th degree, without incurring the responsibilities or suffering the guilt, without even the hint of an affront to the wife at our side.

In speaking of exaggeration, it is important to see what is exaggerated in farce and what is not. While, certainly, the external facts are distorted, the inner experience is so wild and preposterous that it would probably be impossible to exaggerate it. To the inner experience, the farceur tries to be utterly faithful. This fact raises the question whether farce is as indirect a form of literature as it is commonly assumed to be.

What kind of literature is direct? I have addressed the question to well-read persons, and have sometimes received the answer: Jane Austen's novels. For they are straightforward in style and crystal clear in tenor. But is not this limpidity the last effect of indirectness? It is Jane Austen's strategy, surely, to pretend to accept the surfaces of life at what is well-called face value, then, in highly indirect ways, to enable us to sense how much happens beneath those surfaces. An open breach of the surface would be an unthinkable breach of decorum.

Farce, on the other hand, while it begins by accepting the bland, placid, imposing façade of life, proceeds to become farcical by knocking the façade down. The farceur, like the lunatic and the unruly child, flies in the face of decorum.

Harpo Marx is the supreme case in point. For him, there is nothing to do with clothes but take the scissors to them, nothing to do with a façade but throw a bomb at it. Many other comedians destroy things. Few manage so impressively as Harpo to convey the idea of human

nature as in itself destructive. It is the impishness, the quasi-innocence, the complication of aggression with bizarre fantasy; and the dumbness helps, both as a psychological trait (suggestive of a general deficiency) and as a physical fact (for nothing is so economically expressive as silence).

In one of Noel Coward's short farces, a man knocks his mother-in-law out with, if I remember rightly, a straight left to the jaw. As the only form of literature or theatre in which such an incident could occur, farce may reasonably claim to be the most direct of all the forms. Such are the aggressions which are rampant in human beings all day and, as we are increasingly aware, all night. In a sense, Coward's trifle is more realistic than all the realisms. For that—"crudely expressed," as the encyclopedias will have it—is what life is like.

BUT the most direct form is still not in all ways direct. Since, as we have seen, the wishes expressed in farce often appear there in disguised forms, there is still the duality in these fantasies, as in others, of manifest and latent content, of mask and face. Failure to render either the directness or the duality (with its *indirectness*) is usually very marked in modern stage productions. When a character knocks out his mother-in-law, he is acting out the fantasies of millions, yet a bad actor is able to suggest that he is acting out precisely nothing—he didn't mean to hurt the old lady and the play is just a "romp," destined to elicit from newspaper reviewers epithets like "delicious" and "cute."

There are two wrong ways of playing the indirectness of farce: the amateur way and the professional way. The amateur's failure is more or less total. He lacks the art to create a mask of actuality (normality, gravity, sophistication), and, as for the life beneath, he hasn't an inkling how to get at it or, perhaps even, that it is there to be got at. He concludes that, since farce is very energetic, he should bound about, and that, since it is very funny, he should be facetious; and so his furious efforts end in vacuity.

The professional is wiser. He knows he has no such weapon in his armory as funniness. He knows that being funny is a result, and that what God gave him is fantasy; and he uses this fantasy to create a mask. Professional productions of farce tend to be plausible, even ele-

gant, but it is the habit of the professional to neglect the face beneath the mask. Though smooth, his work is hollow. There have been productions of *The Importance of Being Earnest* in which the manner of an upper class was very accurately rendered in voice and gesture but in which one had no feeling of the inordinate aggression of Wilde against Victorian civilization, if not against all civilization.

NOT ALL professional productions take this "naturalistic line" with a farce. On the contrary, more of them nowadays overlook the naturalistic mask entirely and try to give direct expression to the author's fantasy. In this case, the work of the designer and the director, as well as the actor, is concentrated on announcing: this is fantasy, this is artifice, this is unreal. Everyone wears fantastic costumes and gesticulates in a curious manner that the director calls "stylized." The decor seems to be by Toulouse Lautrec and probably is by Mr. Cecil Beaton or Mr. Oliver Messel.

There are two things wrong with this procedure. This *kind* of fantasy is far too superficial and sophisticated for real farce; and, in any case, it is not an advantage to dispense with the façade, because the dynamic of farce proper derives from the interplay between the mask (of actuality) and the real face (of primitive instinct). Even an amateur who could impart a sense of primitive life would fail to communicate farce if he could compose no mask, while the professional who creates the most elaborate "style" is giving us scarcely anything if primitive energy is lacking.

It is, of course, only the professional that one has the right to complain of, and even he might plead that he cannot by himself counteract a trend of the times, this trend being the decline of farce.

In making a certain claim for farce I have stressed that it has more in common with melodrama and even tragedy than with naturalistic drama. In doing so I have understressed the differences, for most of them are obvious. They add up to the fact that tragedy presents a nobler, more profound image of man. Struck with the thought of man's weakness, Pascal, a tragic mind if there ever was one, called him a reed, a thinking reed. Farce confronts the cruder kinds of man's strength, all of which he misuses.

Man, says farce, may or may not be one of the more intelligent animals; he is certainly an animal, and not one of the least violent; and one of the chief uses to which he puts his intelligence, such as it is, is to think aggression when he is not committing it. (Mona Lisa's civilized smile might mean that she was plotting murder, but is more likely to signify that she was imagining murders she would never plot.)

The people who act out his fantasies for the farceur — his characters — are what are commonly stigmatized as "not individuals but types": human nature in the abstract, in the mass, in the rough, in the raw, in anything but in fine personal flower. They are monuments to stupidity, disturbing yet, surely, deliberate reminders that God lavished stupidity on the human race with a recklessly prodigal hand. They put us in mind of our own stupidities. They even teach us (if we are not too stupid to learn) what stupidity is. For one thing it is being

absent in mind: the *distrain*, as Bergson showed, is a comic archetype.

Like Hitler, who acted out farcical fantasies, farce characters pass beyond stupidity into craziness, and the farceur must have the gift of some lunatics (such as paranoids) to build a large, intricate, and self-consistent structure of "improbabilities." *Charley's Aunt* is a loosely organized example. Any Feydeau play is an instance of the tightest and most complex organization possible, and, as a result, Feydeau has been praised by the few who appreciate such things for his superlative craftsmanship.

In this department, a Labiche or a Feydeau is not excelled even by a Shakespeare, and it is fair enough to distinguish them from Shakespeare as "merely" craftsmen, and to assert that the art of farce is "all technique," provided we also see that such craftsmanship and technique arise from a certain mentality and communicate a particular vision (if not exactly a view) of life. When we

The Popular Magazines

THE POPULAR MAGAZINES line the shelves of the drugstores
Of the land, with their cover pictures
Of Hollywood starlets, new model cars, and so forth.
And as the customers come to purchase their toothpaste,
They pause, one by one, for a moment before this display,
Love in their eyes.

Love, says Socrates, love cannot be of nothing,
Nor of something one already has; therefore love is of something
One hasn't. The lovers
Pause by the racks, their saliva working.

And since there can be no love of the ugly, the something
The lovers have not but lovingly wish for
Must be something not ugly but lovely,
No? Yes,
And the Hollywood starlets and new model cars posture brightly
Before their lovers.

Up in the sky
The heavenly racks are heavily laden. Agathon
And the others are driving their horses
To see the penultimate starlet driving her Thunderbird.
They move at a pretty good clip, their saliva working.

Down below
The customers pause for a moment, saliva working;
And Socrates, watching, sees that their love is of nothing,
And that this nothing is ugly, and that furthermore
They do *not* have it at all, for lo! they have bought it
And are moving away to the back of the store for their toothpaste.
Socrates sees all this, rheum in his eyes.

REED WHITEMORE

praise the famous three- and five-act structures of Labiche and Feydeau, what are we praising? At the least, the efficiency with which the playwrights take a piece of life and box it up; at the most, their invention of new kinds of boxes and the virtuosity which they lavish upon packing paper, string, hammer, and nails. Dramatic critics—whose argot can also be “all technique”—speak of the “well-made play” or the closed type of structure as against the open, which is a good beginning if we then observe that the result is a closed *mental* system, a world of its own lit by its own lurid and unnatural sun. There is something frightening about such worlds because there is something maniacal about them. Danger is omnipresent. One touch, we feel and we shall be sent spinning in space. The farceur’s structure of scenes presents points for comparison with systems of delusion.

An example of a feature that has nearly always been considered a merely technical, literary, or theatrical fact is the swift tempo of farce. Men of the theatre encourage actors in farce to “get a move on” for the sake of slick showmanship, that is, to avoid boring the audience. In my passing comments on Chaplin (NR, January 6), I have suggested that the

speeding up of movements has a psychological and moral—or rather, immoral—effect, namely, that of making actions seem abstract and automatic when in real life they would be concrete and subject to free-will. This effect being of the essence, rapidity is not merely a technical asset, it is a psychological necessity. No wonder “slow” productions are dull! No wonder expert critics of the genre, like Sarcey, describe the *verve* of farce as *endiablé*! The devil is in farce rhythm. Although the great farceurs drive with a very firm rein, they are trick artists, and like to give the impression of being behind a runaway horse. This being one of the farcical “facts of life,” what a *trouville* was the plot of *An Italian Straw Hat*! Later, the chase was to be the pride and glory of the Keystone Cops. . . .

It is not my purpose, however, to provide a catalogue of devices and effects but only, by showing how farce functions, to prove that it deserves a more positive definition and could, with the aid of a little psychology, be given one.

This is the second section of a two-part essay by Mr. Bentley. The whole article will appear in a slightly different form as the preface to a forthcoming Hill and Wang anthology of farce.

Requiem for Merrie England

by Charles Curran

A PECULIAR delusion about the United States afflicts many young women in England—particularly if they live near an American air base. It can be called the Penthouse Fallacy. It causes the sufferers to suppose that every male American owns an oil-well and inhabits a penthouse furnished with

These Are the British, by Drew Middleton (Knopf; \$4).

yachts, Cadillacs and gold-plated blondes; and that the Open Sesame to this cave of wonders is a bare affirmative. Pathetic though the fallacy may be, it is nevertheless socially useful — since it makes a sizeable contribution to Britain’s birth-rate.

But there is a corresponding delusion among Americans, not by any means

limited to young women, for which there is no such justification. It is the Merrie England syndrome. The main symptom is the belief that Britain consists of (a) an upper class which wears monocles, lives in haunted castles, and pronounces “very” as if it were spelt “veddy,” and (b) a lower class of happy serfs who lean all day over rustic gates, touch their forelocks, and express themselves by saying “Blimey.” Allied to this is the belief, prevalent in south Boston, that the smaller of the British Isles is populated by colleens who serve poteen to leprechauns in a Celtic twilight while landlords are shot to the music of harps.

If the Merrie England syndrome is curable at all, Mr. Drew Middleton’s book will cure it. In 284 pages, he grinds the syndrome into dust, and replaces it by a picture of contemporary

England that is a masterpiece of accurate reporting.

This is a book about a revolution—the silent revolution that has buried Merrie England, and turned Britain, in Mr. Middleton’s words, into “a hurrying, clamorous, purposeful industrial nation.” It began in 1931, at the depth of the slump, when Free Trade was abandoned and new industries were nurtured behind a tariff wall to fill the gaps caused by the decay of coal and textiles. It was accelerated by the war, which brought a State-directed economy. It has gone forward since 1945, under Socialist and Tory Governments alike. Now both poverty and slumdom have gone. The age of squalor is over.

MR. MIDDLETON examines the results of all this with lucid precision. He writes like a man from Missouri. He insists on seeing and hearing for himself. He rises triumphantly above the occupational hazard of the foreign correspondent; the temptation to suppose that the country you are describing consists merely of the political, administrative and decorative strata that are visible in its capital city. He knows that, in order to see England, you must step far beyond the London quadrilateral that is bounded by Buckingham Palace, the Houses of Parliament, the Fleet Street newspaper offices and the American bar at the Savoy Hotel. You can no more report England from inside the quadrilateral than you can see the United States from 42nd Street.

As a Limey myself, I cannot fault Mr. Middleton on his facts anywhere. (I can detect only one minor blemish. He attributes the words “We are all Socialists now” to King Edward VII, instead of to Sir William Harcourt.) Nor can I find any flaw in his account—which impresses me by its deft percipience—of such subtleties as the British class structure and the position of the Monarchy.

He puts his finger on the two key facts of the British revolution; that it has created a new, non-traditional middle class of technicians, scientists and engineers, and that it has also lifted the pre-war proletariat into a Welfare State world of full employment and social security. He sees that this second group, the manual workers who have benefited most from the revolution, constitute a problem. For now they are hidebound

conservatives. Comfortable, complacent, incurious about the outside world, absorbed to near-hypnosis by their television sets, they want only to stay put. They guard their jobs as jealously as a French peasant his land. They resist any technological change, lest it disturb their pattern of employment. Their power is great; for so close is the electoral balance between the Tories and the Socialists that their votes give them in fact a right of veto.

They seem to me to resemble with startling fidelity those Pueblo Indian communities described by Ruth Benedict in her book *Patterns of Culture*. The Pueblos, as Miss Benedict saw them, have created a peaceable, static, co-operative society, free from any competitive stress, in which nobody seeks to be different from anybody else. It is a low-temperature world where passion of any kind—emotional, political, intellectual—is ruled out. Now the Pueblos, no doubt, can live in this state of magic inconclusiveness indefinitely; for Uncle Sam, that benevolent white father, is

there to look after them. But Britain's position is rather different.

Britain is a crowded island where 50 million human beings are packed together in an area no bigger than the state of Wyoming, one-third the size of Texas. For her to suppose that she can contract out of the competitive struggle is the vainest of dreams. I wish I could be as hopeful as Mr. Middleton seems to be about the chances of persuading our Welfare State Pueblos that Britain must change or smash. In the bland climate of her Indian settlements, she must, somehow or other, foster and stimulate those gross competitive appetites, the crude clash of differential strivings, that alone will enable her to keep afloat in a world that does not owe her a living.

But Mr. Middleton is entitled to reply that he is a reporter, not a fortune-teller, that his concern in his book is with facts not with futures. It is a fair retort. For he has set down all the facts that anybody needs to know in order to form a judgment on contemporary Britain.

party at Diamond Jim Brady's, "I received the prize for being the most graceful dancer."

Such remarks are inoffensive, however; but where critical self-appraisal fails more damagingly is in the multiplication of touches building the portrait of Baruch's unfailing wisdom. Thus he now discloses that "from 1928 on I felt uneasy about the level of stock prices . . . feeling that a break was imminent." It is too bad that he did not disclose this uneasy feeling to Bruce Barton when Barton interviewed him in the spring of 1929. In the *American Magazine* of June, 1929, Barton reported Baruch as anticipating an "industrial renaissance," "such as expansion of production, such a work of rebuilding, such an interchange of goods through foreign trade as we have never experienced before," "a huge volume of business for many years to come."

WHY the success of the book? Aside from the fact that it is pleasant reading, it is obviously a highly comforting reaffirmation of the old-fashioned American myth. Young Baruch, who did not wear shoes regularly until he moved from South Carolina to New York, rose to fortune and fame by application and intelligence. The fact that he was the occasional victim of racial discrimination adds to the Americanness of the story. He was a speculator, of course; but as defined by Baruch speculation becomes the essence of America both in its irreverent gaiety and in its constructive contribution to the nation. His candor about his calling is as disarming today as it was in Wilson's time; it suggests a genial anti-pomposity which is well in the tradition. And speculation has its sober side: after all, did it not build America? "Mankind would be vastly poorer today if it had not been for men who were willing to take risks against the longest odds."

My Own Story has this quality of made-in-America earnestness. What it lacks, however, is any quality of seriousness. Everything is suffused with the mellow light of the public-relations myth. There is no searching account of anything, neither the maneuvers in Wall Street nor the War Industries Board nor Wilson nor Baruch himself. When one occasionally comes on an intelligent reflection in the midst of the anecdotes (e.g., "The real turning point in my

Crackerbarrel Financier

by Arthur Schlesinger Jr.

IT SHOULD BE no surprise, I suppose, that Mr. Bernard Baruch, having proved himself for half a century astute and effective in finance and politics, should now be equally successful in writing a best-selling memoir. *My Own Story* is an autobiography in the deplorable modern manner—that is, it is apparently composed out of memory, as if

Baruch: My Own Story, by Bernard Baruch (Holt; \$5).

the subject had never written a letter, delivered a speech, testified before a congressional hearing, given an interview or done anything to provide a documentary check on the reminiscences of old age. The tone is discursive, mellow and sagacious, and oddments of philosophy interspersed in fragments of narrative. It is hard to tell what precisely this volume is intended to cover. Most of it consists of a series of more or less entertaining anecdotes about the financial history of the period before the First World War; but there are some rather oblique

passages on Wilson and the War Industries Board; and, at times, the author leaps far forward to Franklin Roosevelt's holiday at Hobcaw in 1944, to the Baruch atomic control plan of 1947 and even to the stock market investigation of 1955.

"If there was any 'key' to this process of growing up," Mr. Baruch writes, "it lay in the systematic efforts I made to subject myself to critical self-appraisal." These efforts, alas, are not especially evident in this book, which overflows with amiable vanities. On page 65, Bob Fitzsimmons, the heavyweight champion of the world, says to him, "The prize ring lost a good man in you." On page 87, Mr. Baruch reflects, "It is too bad that in those days there were no TV quiz programs asking questions worth \$64,000 or I might have earned a fortune painlessly." On page 107, "It seemed to me that I was repeating on a smaller scale the financial feat which legend ascribed to Nathan Rothschild at the Battle of Waterloo." On page 154, at a

thinking—and I believe in the thinking of American businessmen — generally was World War I. The war forced a shelving of the old laissez-faire tradition and thrust the government into a wholly new role”), one is surprised and, for a moment, hopeful; but then the thought

is never developed. In deciding to write a best-seller, Mr. Baruch has for once mistaken the market. He would have done better to write a serious book about himself and his times. It might not have done so well now, but it would be doing much better in another half century.

range? But quite a lot of simple questions are left unanswered in this play.

While the writing is pedestrian, I can say *something* good about it. That is that the role of Miriam, the old maid daughter, is a refreshing departure from the Elizabeth Barrett-Catherine Sloper school of repressed virginity. Far from being the browbeaten maiden, Miriam is pure bitter bitch and the role is played with a grand unrelenting viciousness by Nancy Marchand in her Broadway debut.

The other noteworthy performances are also turned in by actors who are not widely known. Peter Lazer is fine as the little boy, Kathleen Maguire is everything she should be as his pretty young mother and John Randolph is outstanding in the minuscule role of Miriam Ackroyd's uninspired and uninspiring suitor. Edith King was both loud and dreary as Mrs. Ling, the most *scrutable* Oriental ever written for the stage. Had the part required her to be Irish or Jewish or Italian or Negro or some other fun-loving minority, her portrayal might have been more endurable.

Sir Cedric Hardwicke's direction was totally commonplace. And the setting by Peter Larkin, who is generally and rightly considered to be the most talented of our young designers, was an ugly, overpowering hodgepodge of architectural impossibilities, although it did a great deal to distract my attention from the play itself.

BUT the biggest surprise is that *Miss Isobel* ever attracted so many gifted people to tamper with it as much as they all obviously have. In one of those arch program notes, the producer, Leonard Sillman, describes the script of *Miss Isobel* as one he “wasn't particularly anxious to find.” Had I been Mr. Sillman, I should have lost it long before it reached New York.

PATRICK DENNIS

THEATRE

Miss Booth's Burden

NO ONE is ever surprised to find that certain elderly people live in the past. Nor is anyone ever very interested in what these old parties have to say about it. This is but one of many obstacles that stand in the way of making *Miss Isobel* a good—or even a bearable—play.

Shirley Booth, who is certainly the most endearing—and possibly the greatest—living actress in America, has suffered in recent years at the hands of playwrights unworthy of her enormous

Miss Isobel, by Michael Plant and Denis Webb (Royale).

talents. Not since William Inge's *Come Back, Little Sheba* has she appeared in anything that is quite good enough.

In two so-so musical comedies (*A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* and *By the Beautiful Sea*) she soared high above the mediocrity of her material, cast each time as an earthy lady of the early nineteen hundreds. And twice again (in *The Time of the Cuckoo* and in *Desk Set*) she was able to wring tears, unaided by song and dance, as an aging office worker searching for love. While none of these offerings was particularly memorable, each made for a pleasant evening in the theatre if only as a means of having Shirley Booth around to show her stuff. But *Miss Isobel*, now playing to sparsely settled audiences at the Royale, is so frightful that not even the great Miss Booth can rise above it. In this new play by Michael Plant and Denis Webb, Shirley Booth is not great—in fact she is not even good.

The story of *Miss Isobel* concerns a grand old lady, Mrs. Isobel Ackroyd, who is living out her declining years in the crumbling General Grant San Francisco mansion her husband brought her

to as a bride of sixteen. With her husband and his fortune both liquidated, Mrs. Ackroyd has had the old showplace remodeled into a communal kitchen sort of apartment house and is herself bedded down beneath the vast copper hood of what was once the stove.

Sweet old Mrs. Ackroyd is the delight of a garrulous Chinese tenant, Mrs. Ling; of young Robin, the eleven-year-old son of a pretty widowed tenant; and, as the play unfolds, of a blind Scotch Korean War veteran from the neighboring hospital. But she is a millstone around the neck of her plain spinster daughter, Miriam, who wants nothing so much as to take what is left of Mrs. Ackroyd's money, grab the first single man she can find and clear out. In the course of the play—and as a result of her daughter's furious harangues — Mrs. Ackroyd has a series of slight strokes and lapses more and more into the past as a teen-age bride, a hostess of thirty and (most embarrassing of all) a little girl of five. A solution of sorts is hastily run up for most of the people involved, but it's sheer agony every minute of the way.

Aside from having little to say and saying it very badly, the authors have adopted the attitude—so popular this season—that only the very young, the very old, the eccentric, the daft and the maimed are nice people, while more usual mortals are all horrid. I reject their ethic.

I also keep asking a couple of those deflatingly practical questions about the goings-on: First, if Mrs. Ackroyd was married at 16 and has an only child under 40, just how senile can she be? Second, if the house contained a hundred rooms and, remodeled, has but two pairs of tenants, how large can their apartments be and why must their poor old landlady sleep on the site of the kitchen

ART

Ford in Your Future

ONE of the most engaging stories in the annals of crime emerged when the noted bank robber and escape artist, Willie Sutton, was captured a few years ago. As a climax in an intensive questioning by criminologists the prisoner was asked, "Willie, why do you rob banks?"

In a brilliant gnomic statement for our time, Willie cut cleanly through all theories of heredity, environment and anything else thought to explain the criminal mind. "That's where the money is," said Sutton.

For the same reason the Ford Foundation has in recent years been never completely absent from the thoughts of those concerned with the position of the arts in America and has often dominated the thoughts of those concerned with the art budgets, institutional or personal. While the Foundation was distributing its largesse to colleges and universities, its officers were subject to chance meetings on airplanes and at table with some of the top museum brass in the country, many of whom had just happened to have brought their pianos, in the form of remarkably detailed plans for the fecundating of the arts with all that gold.

Last March the Foundation began an arts program. Last September the Foundation made five preliminary grants, totalling about three quarters of a million dollars. While the sum is chickenfeed compared to the needs of American art establishment (or the resources of the Ford Foundation), all five grants are characterized by two things: a clear possibility of definite if limited achievement, with the stress perhaps on the development of new creative talent, and the effort to find a workable blueprint for dealing with a specific arts problem.

Thus the Cleveland Play House is being staked to an attempt to bring professional theatre, on a touring repertory basis, back to the small town from which it vanished with the advent of the motion picture. The plan calls for the creation and training of a fifteen member company who will work together in Cleveland for two years before embarking on a thirty-six week national tour.

Thus, too, six symphony orchestras, working through the American Music Center will commission a total of eighteen new symphonic works over the next three years, with each orchestra committed to perform at least four of the six annual compositions.

\$100,000 is earmarked to help the New York City Opera Company put on five weeks of contemporary American operas, with part of the money allocated to bringing selected composers to New York to attend rehearsals and deepen their understanding of the bridge between the idea and the reality.

Another \$165,000 goes to the New Orleans Experimental Opera Theatre to support for three years its program of developing new singing talent.

THE SINGLE GRANT in the visual arts is also the only grant to a school: \$150,000 in the Minneapolis School of Art to develop "a curriculum aimed at visually, rather than verbally, proficient students, whether they are being taught natural science, social studies or painting." This enterprise, to be carried on over a five year period is the only one of the five with the shadow of misdirection on it. The problem addressed is that of the fierce competition the studio-oriented art school—such as Minneapolis—is getting from university art departments with their regional accreditation, academic degrees and direct connection with art teaching at all levels, whereby most artists earn their bread. In the Foundation's report the School's "hope" is to "maintain control of its curriculum while winning acceptance through a demonstration of values peculiar to visual perception as it underlies artistic training." Compared with the directness of the experiments in music and theatre, the Minneapolis plan seems to be confused in motive, despite the encouraging realism of the Foundation's promise for support, namely that the professional art school is in serious trouble and the trouble stems from the sudden practical necessity of meeting academic standards drawn from a completely different teaching tradition. The Minneapolis plan seems to be trying to

save the independent art school from absorption by the university by broadening the art school's scope to include some of the traditional university goals. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em is probably good basic advice, but if your fundamental concern is preservation of identity, you have to bear in mind that when you start being them, you stop being you.

While neither Ford nor Minneapolis mentions it, the central problem for the art student who is going to support himself by teaching is not broadening himself in natural science and social studies through his visual proficiency, but is rather reconciling the equally extraordinary time demands of studio work and courses in education. It is entirely possible that, given the education bias of state authorities, there is no solution. The teaching effort will increasingly become that of teaching people to teach people to teach art, and the serious art school graduate will increasingly turn to means other than teaching for support.

The bias toward the performing arts and those creative arts dependent upon the performing arts is evident. The bias, however, probably springs from the complex mechanics of the arts in America rather than from any Ford conviction that music is either more worthy or in more desperate straits than either painting or sculpture. The composer, the singer, the instrumentalist, the actor are all as likely as not to get their paychecks from non-profit, even municipally supported institutions. The painter or sculptor gets his from a businessman, the art dealer. Under the terms of its existence the Foundation is prohibited from dealing directly with the central agency of the visual arts. It will be interesting to see how—or whether—the Foundation attacks that problem.

IN its report the Foundation stresses that these five initial grants are neither "an exact image of its program objectives" nor necessarily related to the most important problems under consideration. All of the grants come under the heading of experiments and studies. A whole separate category yet to be announced is "creative development of individual talent." ("Individual assistance . . . will not resemble a normal fellowship program, and applications will not be required.")

FRANK GETLEIN

Correspondence

(Continued from page 3)

phrase in *The New Republic*, but I hope that Mr. Schlesinger's books are better documented than his letter.

I can give Mr. Schlesinger many more instances of Mencken's violent phrases against lynching and other forms of anti-Negroism. But these remarks must be properly weighed in his entire philosophy. I have been with him when he called Hitler an idiot, and immediately thereafter defended Nazi theories (as I point out at great length in my book: *H. L. Mencken: A Portrait from Memory*). I have been with him when he sneered at the "professional Negro-haters" and in the next breath maintained that Negroes were an inferior race congenitally.

Why is it that people like Mr. Schlesinger, who barely knew Mencken, if at all, feel so cocksure about his devotion to civil rights and general human decency whereas people who knew him very well, over many years, like Herbert Bayard Swope and Alfred A. Knopf (Mencken's publisher) admit that Mencken was a Nazi sympathizer and saw little sense in combatting Ku Kluxism? (See my letter in *The New Republic*, November 18). Mencken's closest friend in his whole life, Philip Goodman, refused to see him when he realized that Mencken was more interested in defending the Vaterland than in defending the principles of human decency.

The correspondence column of a magazine is hardly the place to go into the complicated matter of Mencken's vicious racist theories and his astonishing silence

whenever his beloved Germany did something unsavory—and by silence I mean the absence of truly effective speech and action.

I urge the readers of *The New Republic* to read Max Nomad's fine analysis of Mencken's *Minority Report*, and of Mencken as a whole in *The Socialist Call*, (September, 1956). I also urge them to read what Edgar Kemler has to say on this subject in *The Irreverent Mr. Mencken*, still the only full length study of Mencken that can be taken at all seriously:

Since the advent of Hitler in 1933, if not before, he had been quietly flirting with the newfangled doctrines of Nazism and Fascism. In absolute terms he could not condone the suppression of liberties, or the arbitrary persecution of the Jews, or the "meretricious" chauvinism of the Nazi regime. On the other hand, compared with the New Deal, it had its points. It was a democracy that had turned against itself. It kept the masses quiet and well fed; it put the church in its place; and it seemed to protect property rights against reformers of all kinds. Nor did he dissent entirely from its racial theories for he too had always arranged the races in a hierarchical order, putting the Germans above the Jews. . . . The more he reflected upon the Fascist experiment the more he believed that Fascism, for better or for worse, had a promising future in the Western world, and that an "intelligent Fascism" operated by incorruptible naval officers might be just the thing for America.

CHARLES ANGOFF

New York, N. Y.

. . . Mr. Knopf replies

IN Mr. Angoff's previous letter (NR, November 18,) I read:

Mencken's own publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, admitted that Mencken was a Nazi sympathizer in an interview with S. Regensberg which appeared in the *Jewish Daily Forward* on November 18, 1956.

Mr. Regensberg did interview me in November, 1956. We spoke English but the interview was published in Yiddish, which I do not read. I have never seen a translation of this interview, but Mr. Regensberg now tells me that he included in it the following:

He hinted that Mencken was anti-Semiticly inclined and had sympathy for the German Nazis, but that he

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never brought his feelings out publicly. Knopf used to have heated arguments with him when they were together. Notwithstanding this they remained good friends because he considered Mencken to be a very learned man.

Had I been given any opportunity to read Mr. Regensberg's copy in advance I would have insisted that he strike out the above, for it certainly does not represent what I said to him about Mencken, what I believe about Mencken, or what I know to be the facts. Mencken did not like all Jews; nor do I, though I am completely Jewish. He objected, as I always have to the notion put forward by so many Jews that all Jews are handsome, good, and honest. This hardly makes us "anti-Semitic" inclined." I remember when my good friend the Yiddish novelist the late I. J. Singer, well known to the *Jewish Daily Forward's* readers, had to defend himself publicly at a *New York Times* book fair against charges that his Jewish characters were so often unpleasant people. It would certainly be far from true to say that Mencken "had sympathy for the German Nazis," as William Manchester has so clearly demonstrated. "Knopf used to have heated arguments with him when they were together." We may have argued (never about the Nazis) but during the more than 40 years that we were friends. I cannot recall that any heat ever developed between us. Finally, the notion that we remained good friends because I considered Mencken to be a very learned man is preposterous. Of course Mencken was a learned man; but he was a dearly beloved friend, a companion in work and at play for more than a generation, and

the man who for better or worse—and I think it was very much indeed for better—had more influence on me than any single person with whom I have ever come in contact.

As for Mr. Angoff and his book, they speak for themselves.

ALFRED A. KNOPI

New York, N. Y.

► *What Johnny Needs to Know*

SIRS:

I F SAWIN AND NORMAN ("What Johnny Needs to Know," *NR*, Dec. 23) expect to get results from forcing mathematics on all college students, they will first have to find several thousand mathematics teachers. I suppose that somewhere there must be a teacher or two competent in the field, but in 17 or 18 years of schooling I never found one who could or would give a straight lucid answer to any question that started with Why.

In schools rated from fair to excellent where I begged teachers to teach me mathematics they gave me a feeling that they knew little of what they were doing and nothing at all of why they were doing it. The best of my math teachers had a stock reply to Why: to get the answer. This was crushing wit, but it taught me only to ask no questions. Do I wrong my teachers in suspecting that they didn't know the really important answers?

EMMETT SWISSHELM

New York City

► *Friends and Enemies of Graves*

SIRS:

THANK YOU for those articles and reviews by Robert Graves. He never writes a non-stimulating paragraph. . . .

The latest review entitled "Maenads, Junkies and Others" (*NR*, Dec. 23) presents a very serious subject in a delightful and informative way. The recent presentation of the autobiography of Dylan Thomas' widow was hilarious. . . .

Thanks for a fine magazine that brings some motion and considerable light down here.

EDWIN M. GALI

Beaumont, Texas

SIRS:

COULDN'T we trade Robert Graves off for Orphan Annie? . . .

EDWARD M. O'MALLEY

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